



Docket No. 1501-1260
Appln. No. 10/501,767

REMARKS

This application has been amended so as to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

The Official Action objects to the disclosure based on a number of identified informalities. Please note that applicants have amended the narrative portion of the specification in such a manner as to eliminate the bases for this objection, the reconsideration and withdrawal of which are therefore respectfully requested.

The Official Action rejects claims 1, 2, 3, ~~6~~, 8-19, 22, 33 and 34 under 35 USC §102(b) as being unpatentable over DISCENZO. The Official Action separately rejects claims 4, 5, 7 and 31 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over DISCENZO in view of BLEMEL. Finally, the Official Action rejects claim 23 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over DISCENZO in view of PIETY et al.

The Official Action explicitly states, however, that claims 20, 21, 24-30, 32 and 35-44 are allowable but for their dependence from rejected base claims. In light of this, and without agreeing to the correctness of the anticipation/obviousness rejections, applicants have amended the claims remaining in the application into a form to reflect the coverage of a number of the allowed claims.

In addition to such amendment of the existing claims, applicants have added new claim 45. Such claim recites features



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The combination of features recited in such claim is believed to be absent from the known prior art, considered either individually or collectively.

Claims 46-57 depend from allowable claims and recite further features of the present invention described in the application as originally filed.

In light of the amendments provided above and the arguments offered in support thereof, applicants believe the present application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions or requires further clarification of any of the above points, the Examiner may contact the undersigned attorney so that this application may continue to be expeditiously advanced.

Please charge the fee of \$600 for the three extra independent claims and \$550 for the 11 extra claims of any type added herewith, to Deposit Account No. 25-0120.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

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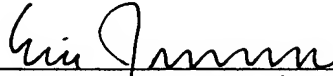
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overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional
fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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